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The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, June 25. 1692.

Queſt. 1. *THe Holy Bible being faithfully tranſlated out of the Original Tongues, is our only Rule of life, and is experienced to be every way ſufficient thereunto: But there are ſome who tell us the Original Copies from whence our preſent Engliſh Tranſlation hath been taken are not the ſame with thoſe that immediately proceeded from God at firſt; but have received many alterations ſince then, which befell the Old Teſtament (as they ſuppoſe) either from the Malice of the Jews, or elſe by the Injury of the length of time, wherein they ſay it hath ſuffered the like fate of other Books: It is therefore deſired you would tell us whether the Original Copy from whence our Bible is taken, be the ſame that at firſt proceeded from God without any material alteration, or not, ſeeing if it be the ſame, we are well enough, but if it be not, we have no Rule of Obedience among us that we know of?*

Anſw. Our *Bookſeller* hath newly publiſhed a Book wherein this Queſtion is fully anſwered, (Entituled, **The Compleat Library**,) in a Diſcourſe concerning the Integrity of the Hebrew Bible, wherein 'tis proved, by divers Arguments, that the *preſent Original Copy* is the ſame that at firſt proceeded from God without any material Alteration befallen it either by the Malice of the Jews, or the Injury of the length of time, or any other way whatſoever. In which Diſcourſe the Queſtion is not only plainly ſtated and proved, but alſo the ſeveral *Objections* of *Ludovicus Capellus*, and others, againſt the Integrity of the Hebrew Bible, are fully anſwered.

Some time ſince we receiv'd a Paper of Queries, dated *Dublin*, which had almoſt bin loſt among the Crowd; but having lately diſcover'd 'em, we ſhall here anſwer as many of 'em as we think convenient.

Queſt. 2. *Does the Scripture any where affirm an Election of a determinative number of men to Eternal Life and Happineſs?*

Anſw. It's an eaſie matter to be miſtaken in things of this *Nature*: However, if we are ſo, we'll profeſs our ſelves ready to change our Opinion on the producing better reaſons, and in the mean time not to have either angry or uncharitable thoughts of thoſe who are of a different Judgment. To the Queſtion, We can't be ſatisfied by any of thoſe *Scriptures* which are brought for that purpoſe, that there is any ſuch Election of a *determinate number* as either puts a force on their Natures, and *irreſiſtibly* ſaves them, or abſolutely excludes all the reſt of Mankind from Salvation. The chief Texts commonly brought in favour of that Opinion, are theſe following: *Acts* 13. 48. *As many as were ordained to eternal Life believed*: But *Grotius* and *Hammond*, Mr. *Mede* in his Diſcourſe on the τεθέωνοι, and others, ſeem to make it pretty clear, that τεταγμένοι here ſignifies no more than *Inſtructi*, — diſciplin'd, liſted in the number of thoſe who ſeek *Eternal Life*, ταῖτω being a military word, and ſo uſed by good Authors; and accordingly St. *Chryſoſtom* as he is quoted by Dr. *Hammond*, interprets the place, "Separated to God, devoted, addicted, prepared "or diſpoſed to Eternal Life. Another place moſt frequently urg'd, and which ſeems moſt favourable to this Opinion, is that *Eph.* 1. 4. *As he hath choſen us in him before the Foundation of the World.* By the word *Electio*, ſays *Grotius*, is here meant vocation by the Goſpel, as on the contrary Vocation is ſometimes taken for Election, 1 *Cor.* 1. 24. *To them that are called, both Jew and Gentile, Chriſt the power of God*, &c. Nor does (he goes on) the word *Election* improperly ſignifie thoſe great "benefits reſerv'd for thoſe who were to live in the time "of the *Meſſiah*; as the word ἐκλογὴ is taken, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 4. "Not that hereby is underſtood the actual *calling* "of the Jews and Gentiles, but the decree for their *cal-* "*ling*. Thus far he; we add, that there's no doubt but whoſoever are ſav'd, receive ſo great a benefit, not thro' their own merits, but Gods mercy in Jeſus, to whom all his works were known from the Foundation of the World, that is, from all Eternity, but yet we think there's no one place in the H. Scripture which proves that ſo many men and no more were *irreſiſtibly determin'd* to everlaſting Salvation.

Queſt. 3. *A virtuous young woman is ſenſible that her Mother keeps a ſcandalous houſe, the* young Woman *is her ſelf in ſervice in an honeſt Family, and deſires to know how ſhe ought to demean her ſelf towards her Mother; whether ſhe ought to avoid her Houſe, and not viſit her: The matter of Fact is certainly true, pray reſolve what is her Duty in this Caſe?*

Anſw. She ought (we think) in the firſt place modeſtly and humbly to remonſtrate with her concerning the manner of Life which ſhe now leads, with the ſcandal on't at preſent, and the evil conſequences for the future: Or if ſhe'll not hear or mind what ſhe ſays, to get ſome diſcreet *Friend* or *Neighbour* to take the *Task* upon 'em: But if neither of theſe methods prevail, we think ſhe ought to take ſome Order that a Magiſtrate may receive Information concerning it. Our reaſon is, here's one of theſe two Evils to be choſen, either to ſuffer a Parent to go on in ſo *lewd a Courſe of Life*, which muſt ruine her Soul, or elſe to expoſe her to *Infamy* and *Puniſhment* in this World, which yet is of the two much more *eligible*, and perhaps may bring her to Repentance. In the mean time, if ſhe perſiſts in her wicked practices, without any hope of Amendment, there's little doubt but ſhe ought to forbear her Converſation, not only from the *Scandal*, but the *Danger* of it, leſt ſhe ſhou'd attempt to breed her up in the ſame *laudable Employment*.

Queſt. 4. *Doth not the Word of God declare him guilty of* Self-Murder, *who being ſick or wounded, would refuſe and deſpiſe the uſe of probable Means for Recovery, tho' uneaſie and painfull, becauſe he could not know that God would Bleſs 'em for that End?*

Anſw. If there were certainly *many Millions* upon whom God hath abſolutely reſolv'd, that no means ſhou'd do any good, tho' they made uſe of 'em with the utmoſt *care* and *diligence*, it would be no great Encouragment to any to make uſe of ſuch means. But on the contrary, we ſay as before, that thoſe who do honeſtly uſe them, and do their parts, (which 'tis their own faults if they do not) may be ſure that God will not be wanting in his, but bleſs the means to the *Ends* for which he has appointed them.

Queſt. 5. *How many years from the laying the Foundation of* Solomons Temple *to the 70 years Captivity?*

Anſw. If the 70 years are to be reckon'd from the Captivity of *Jeconiah*, it was 430 years, and 2 months, as is plain from the following Sums: The Foundation of the Temple was laid in the 2*d.* month of the fourth year of *Solomons* Reign, as we are told in 2 *Chron.* 3. 2. after which he lived 36 years, 40 being all the time of his Reign. *Rehoboam* reign'd 17, *Abijam* 3, *Aſa* 41, *Jehoſhaphat* 25, *Jehoram* 8, *Ahaziah* 1, *Athaliah* 6, *Joaſh* 40, *Amaziah* 29, *Uzziah* 52, *Jotham* 16, *Ahaz* 16, *Hezekiah* 29, *Manaſſeh* 55, *Amon* 2, *Joſiah* 31, *Jehoahaz* 3 months, *Jehoiakim* 11 year, *Jehoiachin*, or *Jeconias* 3 months, the total 430 years, two months, as above.

Queſt. 6. *Your Opinion of* Jacob Behmen's *Book entituled*, The three Principles of the Divine Eſſence of the Eternal Dark, Light and Temporary World, *&c. and what Religion he was of?*

Answ. No doubt but *Jacob Behmen* was a Good Man, and had Curious Notions and Speculations, as the Writers of Myſtick Divinity have, and their Conceptions are too fine oftentimes, like the Schoolmens Subtilties, he has endeavoured to render that intelligible which Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive: This he thinks he has ſeen in his mind, and has conceived, and can utter by Words, which are ſo coined and Uſed with ſo much Obſcurity, that it renders the whole inconſiſtent, and Craſed to a Reader of ſound Judgment; altho' it be too miſterious, yet *Socinians*, *Hobbiſts*, *Deiſts*, and thoſe who wholly would have no Myſteries in Religion, but all reaſon, are as much Enthuſiaſts as he: But in *Jacob Behmen*'s Works are to be ſeen many excellent things, for the Man at ſome times had lucid Intervals and Curious Conceptions, and thoſe that would take the Pains to Garble his Writings, as they have done *Seneca*'s Morals, (which are as inconſiſtent) they might make excellent Books of them.

Queſt. 7. *What is Cotchoneal?*

Anſw. Some Authors deliver their Opinions thus, That it's the Berries of a ſort of Oak in *Candia*; others, that it is the Seeds of Prickle Pears; others, that it is the Inſects, or Cochineal Flyes, engendred of the Fruit or the Blood of Red Pears or their Leaves: The like is in *Bermudas* and *New-England*. Red-Wood that affords a Berry, out of the Berries come Worms, thoſe Worms turn into Flyes, which feed on the ſame Berries, theſe Flyes yield a Tincture not in the leaſt inferiour to the Cotchoneal Flyes, *&c.* *Vid. R. S. Tranſact.*

Queſt. 8. *In a Book entituled,* The Hiſtory of the ATHENIAN SOCIETY, *I find a great Commendation of the* Female Sex, *inequalling their Capacities to the men: Now I deſire to know whether the Author of that Hiſtory have not gathered together all the Women that were of any repute ſince the Creation to make out his pretended excellence of that Sex, and whether there were ever any example of that* dullneſs in Man *which daily converſation offers us in Women?*

Anſw. The Queriſt ſeems to be highly offended at the Author of the above mention'd *Hiſtory*, for ſpeaking ſo well of the *Fair Sex*; however, tho' we have diſown'd any Knowledge of that *Hiſtory* 'till 'twas almoſt Printed, yet we muſt ſo far juſtifie his Performance, as to defend *that Point*; therefore in Anſwer to the Queriſt, we muſt tell him that the Author has not Nam'd one half of the *Illuſtrious of that Sex*, which Hiſtory has commended to Poſterity; nor was it neceſſary he ſhou'd, ſince he ſpecify'd enough to prove his Poſition: Nor do we here think it neceſſary to enumerate all that he has omitted, ſince that wou'd be more than we cou'd bring within the compaſs of *one Mercury*: However, that he may ſee there are more, we will inſtance in two or three particulars. Firſt, *Aſpatia*, mention'd by the Hiſtorian only by Name, was a Lady Eloquent, and Learn'd in both Philoſophy and Poetry. *Zenobia*, in the time of *Galienus*, aſſum'd the Government of *Palmyra*, and great part of the Eaſt, after the Death of *Odenatus* her Huſband, and maintain'd her Power by Policy and Strength againſt the Force of *Rome* on one hand, and that of *Perſia* on the other, 'till oblig'd to yield to the Proweſs of *Aurelianus*. The Wife of *Aſdrubal*, *Hannibal*'s Brother, diſdain'd to accept of thoſe Terms of Surrender her Huſband obtain'd from the *Romans*, but with her two Sons threw her ſelf from a lofty Tower into the Funeral Pile of her Countrey, *Carthage* being all in a Flame, reſolving not to outlive the Liberty of her Countrey, tho' ſhe might: A Courage and Reſolution beyond the *Romans* that Conquer'd it. *Axiothea*, a Lady of great Wit and Soul, who diſguis'd her ſelf in Man's Cloaths to hear *Plato*, whoſe Diſciple ſhe was, as well as *Laſthenia* of *Mantinda*. *Magdalene Anbeſpine*, Lady of *Villeroy*, was one of the greateſt Ornaments of the *French* Court, for Wit and Beauty, and wrote ſeveral Pieces both in Verſe and Proſe, and in her Praiſe *Rouſard* has writ ſeveral Poems. As for the other part of his Query, *Whether there were ever any Example of that Dullneſs in Man, which daily Converſation offers us in Woman?* We Anſwer, Yes, abundant, but we ſhall inſtance only in one, and queſtion not but if his Converſation be not with the more ſordid of this Sex, and the moſt refin'd of the other, his Converſation affords him Proof enough, tho' he ſeem to deny it: But to the inſtance —— *Atticus*, the Son of *Herodes Atticus*, a wealthy *Athenian*, was ſo ſtupid, that he cou'd never learn his Letters, which made his Father provide him twenty four *Servants*, to each of which he gave *a Letter of the Alphabet* for Name, and pinn'd their Forms and Characters on his Son's Breaſt, that ſeeing their ſhapes, he might be able to call every Servant by his Name; this ſtrange expedient, our Author ſays, brought him at laſt to read, tho' he was never capable of profiting much by it. Now we defie the Queriſt to give us one inſtance of the *Fair Sex* equal in Dullneſs to *Atticus*, or indeed to himſelf that ſent ſo impertinent a Query, the Ladies generally having a quicker Apprehenſion than the Men; ſo that we cannot Condemn the Hiſtorian for the Encomiums he has on that Sex to which Mankind owes its Being and Encreaſe.

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